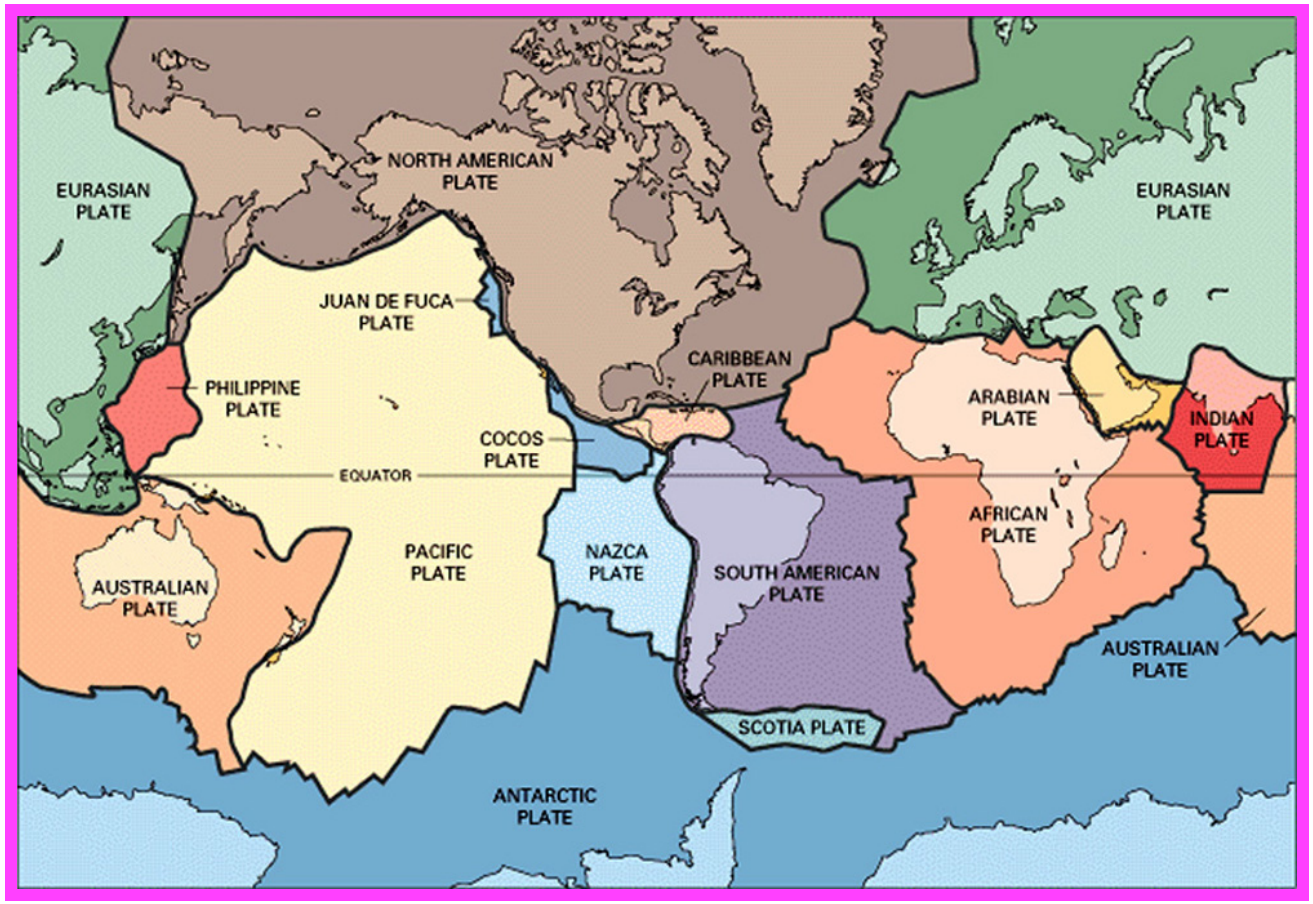
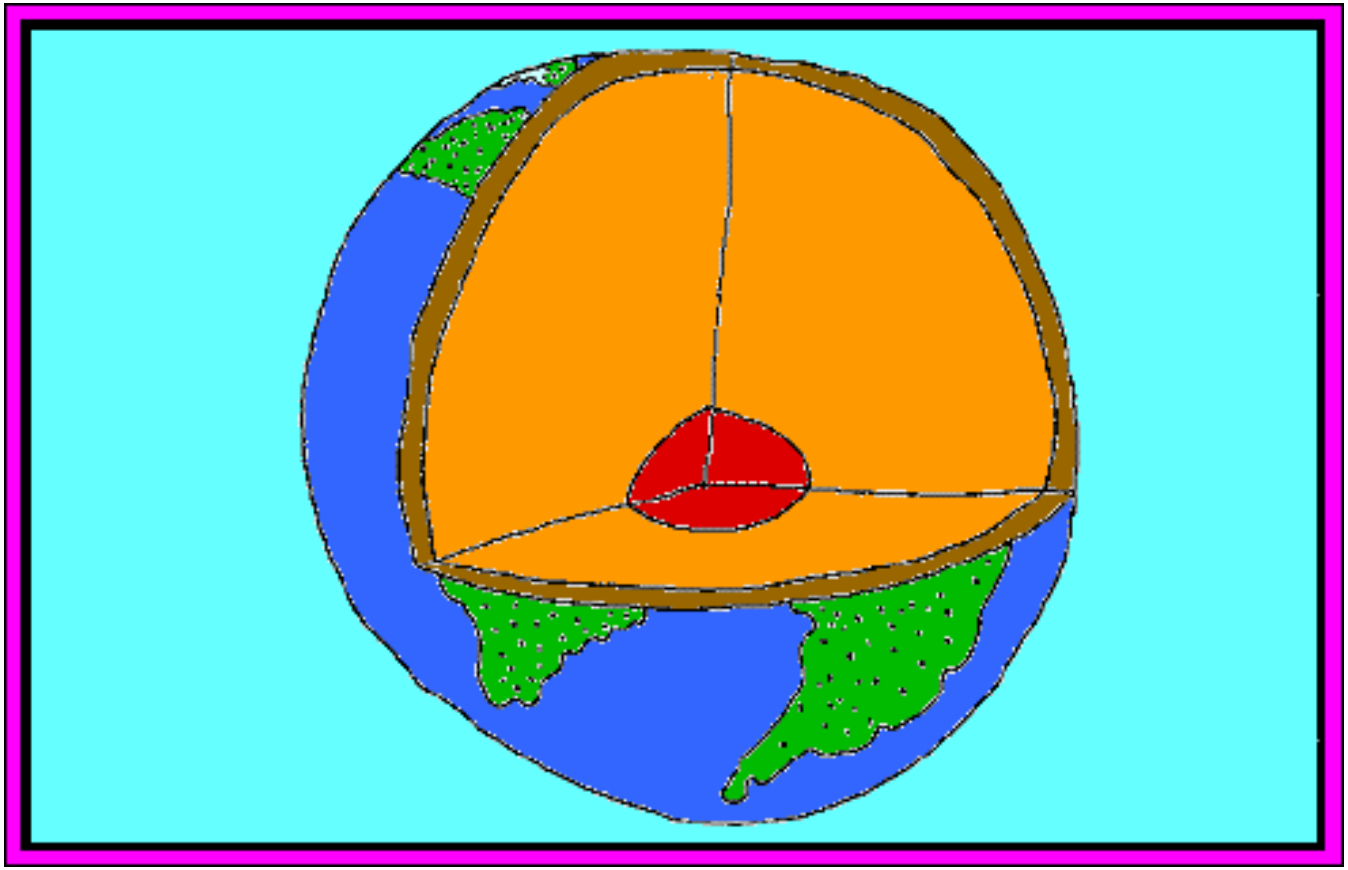
Plate Tectonics

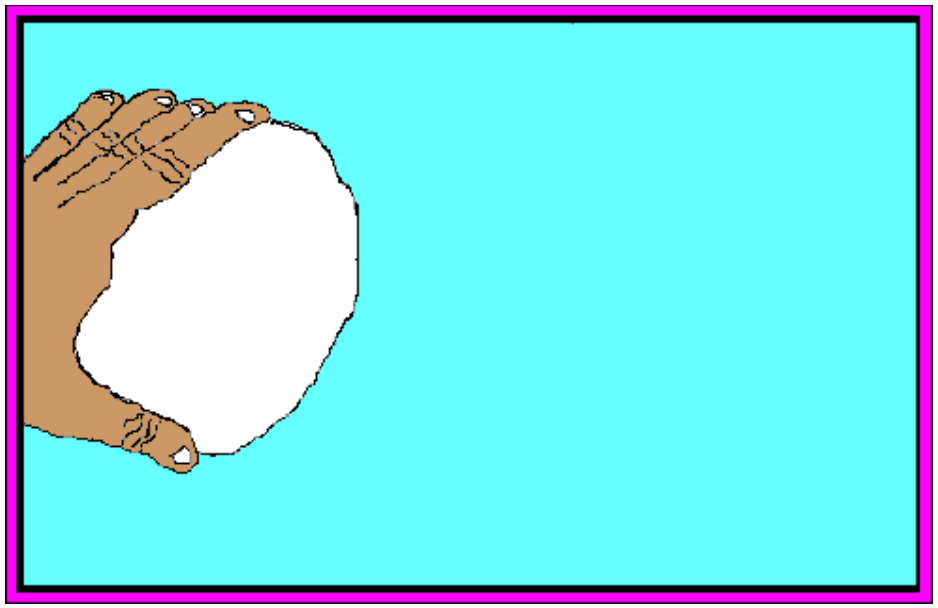


The Earth has three main layers.



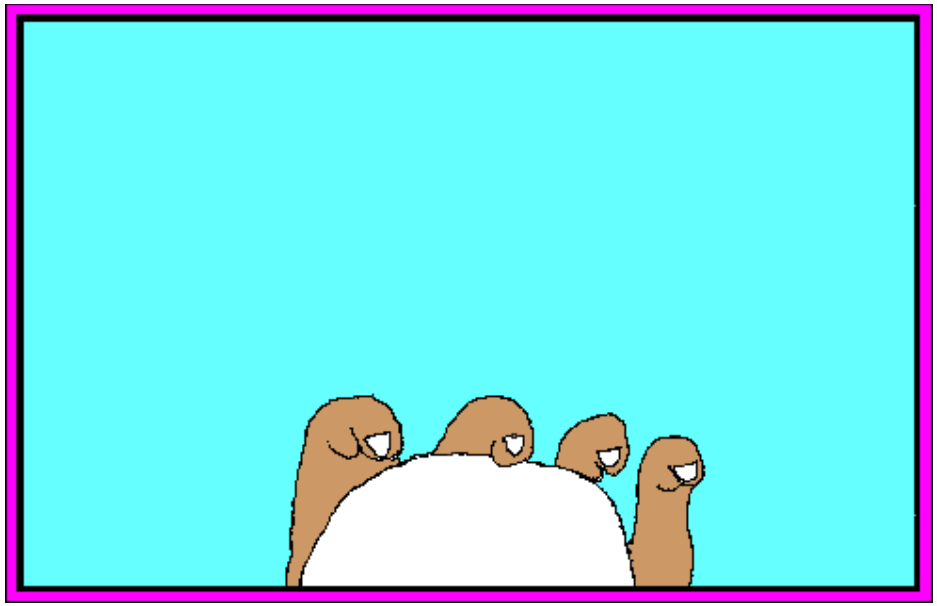
Crust, Mantle, and Core.

Hard-Boiled Egg



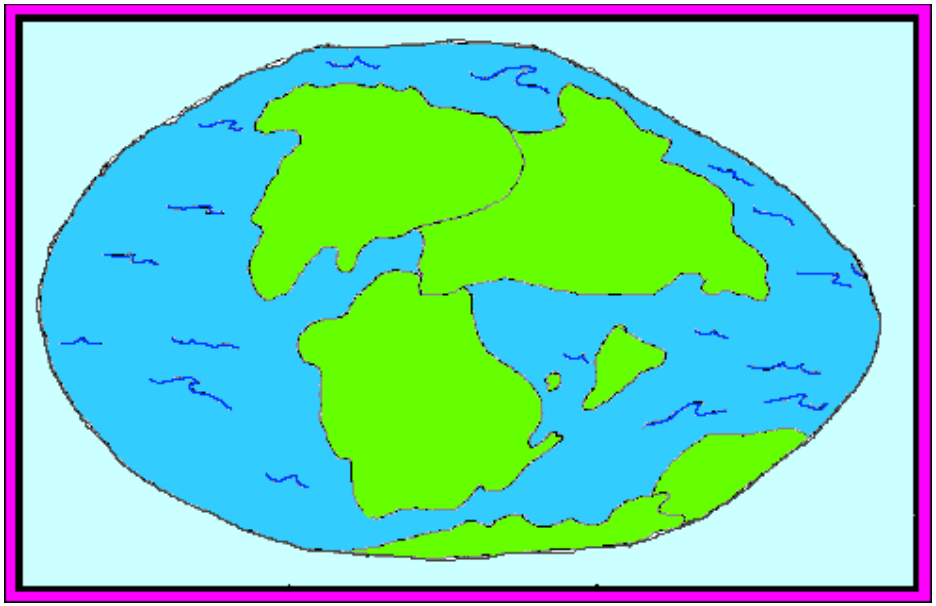
We can use a hard boiled egg as an example to represent these layers of the earth. The shell represents the crust, the white part represents the mantle, and the yolk represents the core.

Crack the Shell



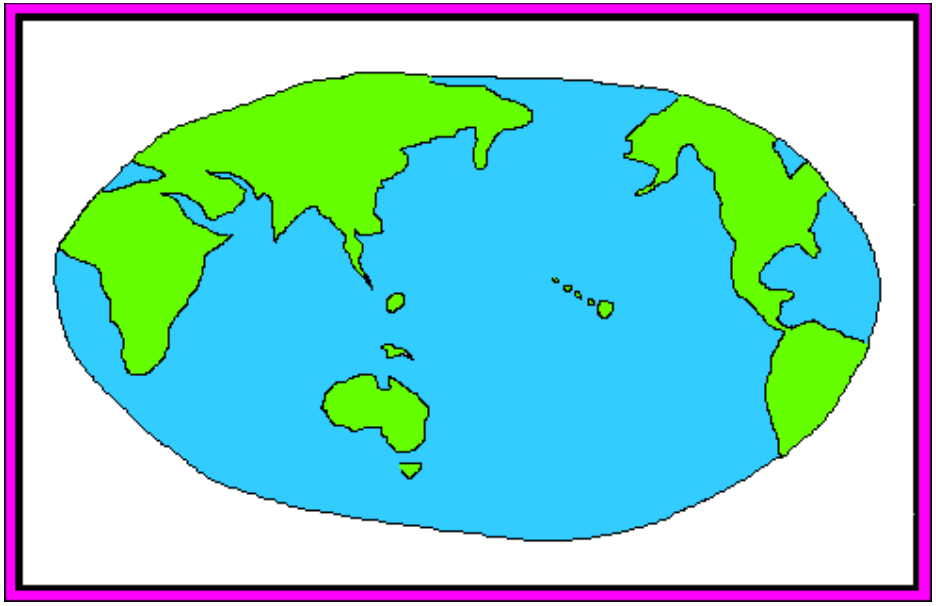
When we crack the shell of the hard boiled egg, it is similar to tectonic plates that cover our earth. These plates are also called crustal or lithospheric plates.

Pangaea



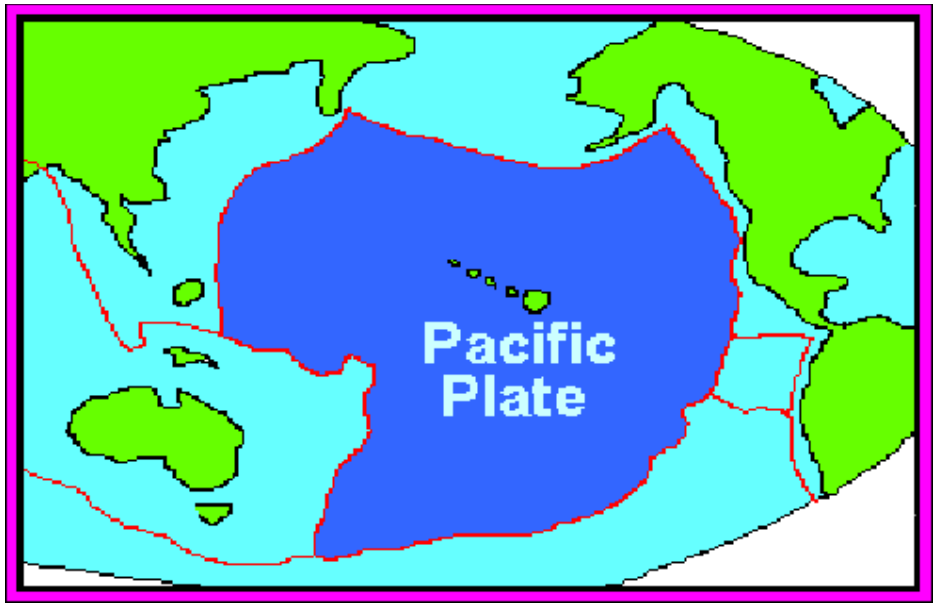
Scientists believe that at one time all the continents were joined together to form a supercontinent called Pangaea. Pangaea is a Greek word meaning "all land." After millions of years, Pangaea slowly drifted apart forming the continents we have today.

Major Plates



The earth is split into seven to twelve major plates. Some of the major plates are the Eurasian Plate, North and South American Plate, Indo-Australian Plate, Nazca Plate, Antarctic Plate, African Plate, and the Pacific Plate.

Ring of Fire



There are more than 300 volcanoes around the Pacific Plate. These volcanoes are known as the Ring of Fire. It is called the Ring of Fire because there are so many volcanoes around the edges of the Pacific Plate.

Movement of Plates

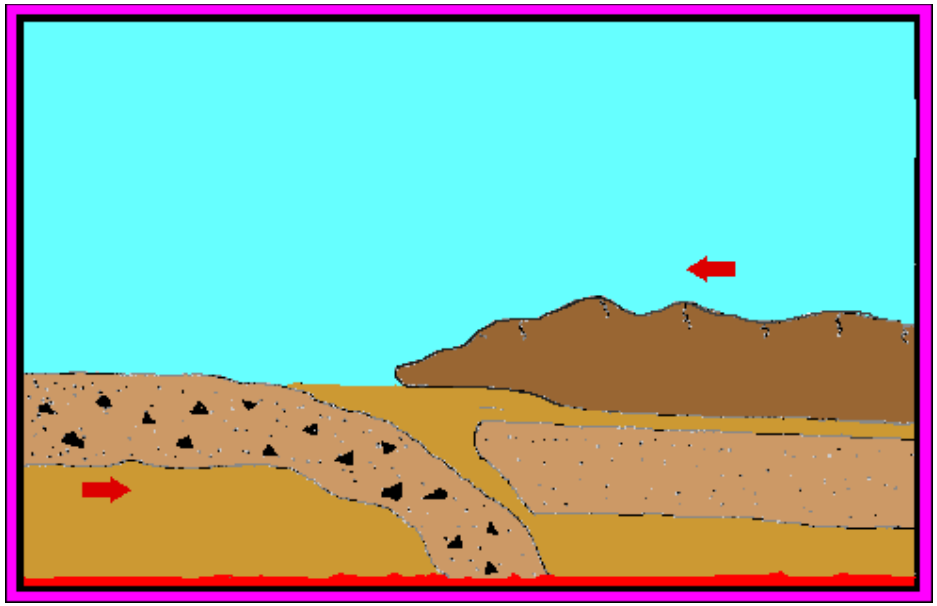
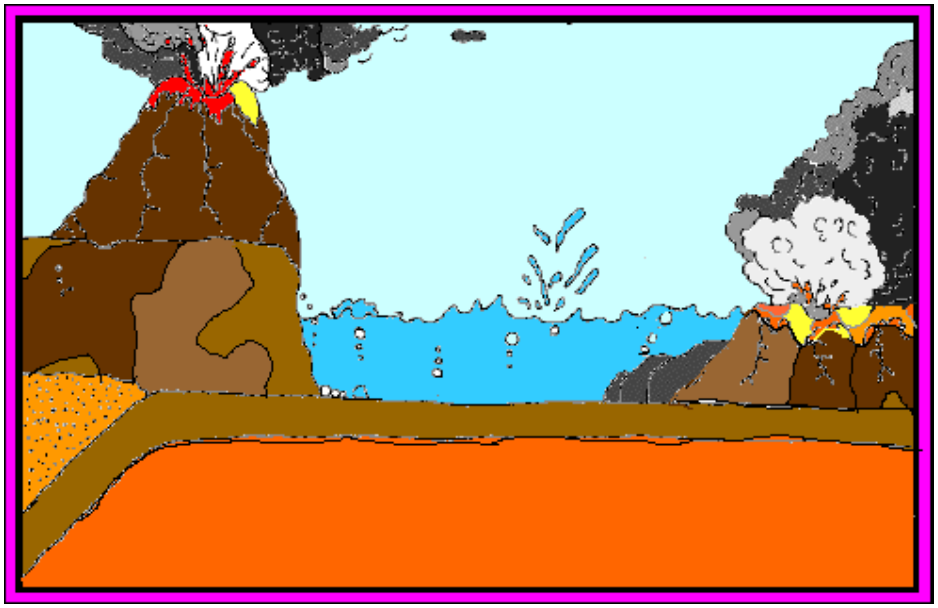


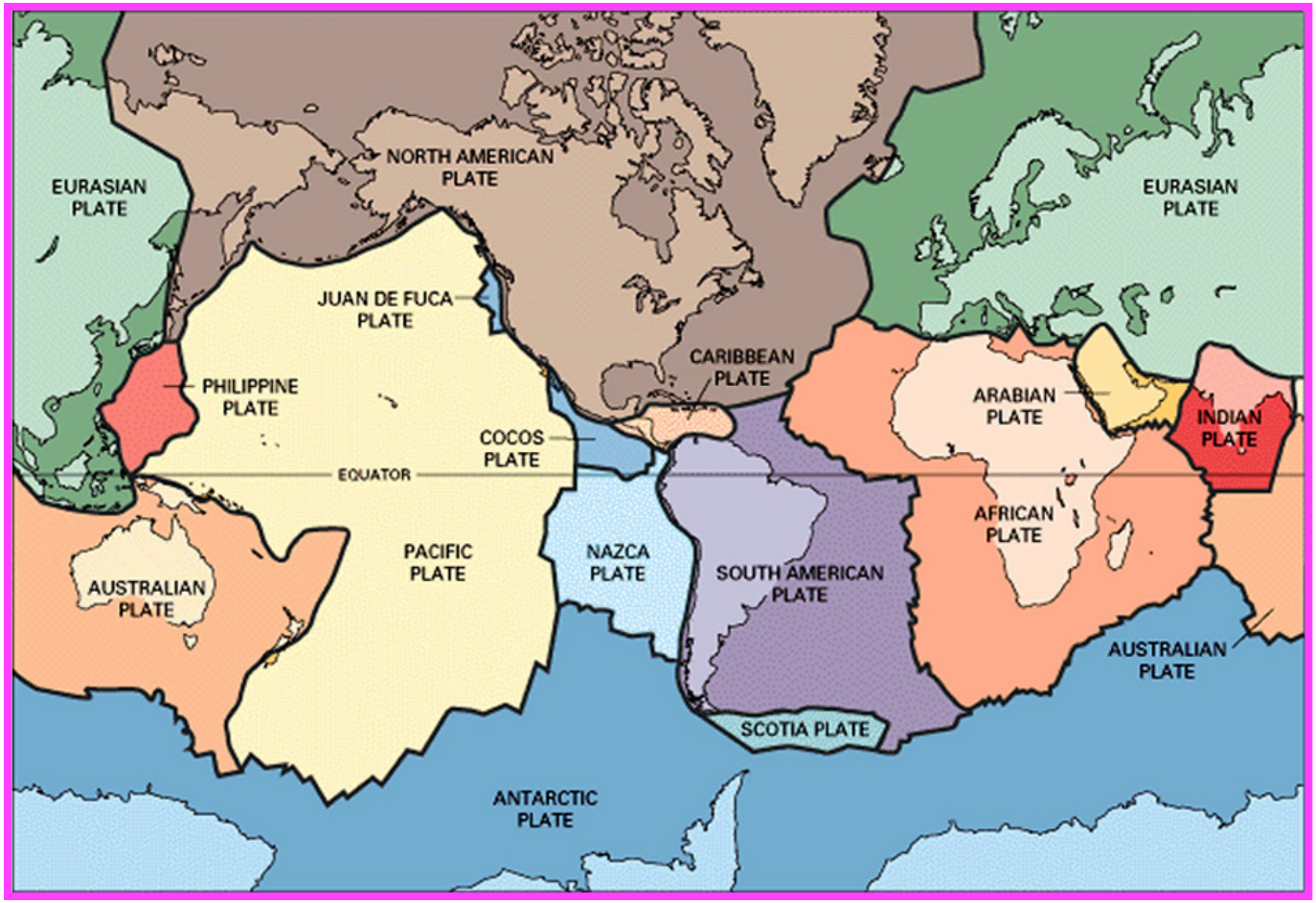
Plate tectonics move about a half inch to 4 inches a year by spreading apart, sliding by, or colliding into each other.

Earthquakes and Volcanoes



Earthquakes and volcanoes occur along the edges of these plates.

The End



Now, color and label your **Lithospheric Plates Worksheet**.